

face-to-face meeting with the Postmaster General of this country, so that as elected representatives of the people we can sit down and express directly to the Postmaster General what our concerns are, and to seek from the Postmaster General guarantees and assurances that the people that we represent, the small American companies and these American workers, will not have to pay this heavy price in terms of job loss. So I close my remarks by saying that it is my intention within the next few days to approach other Members of this body and to ask them to join me in this effort as we carry on these discussions with the Postal Service.

#### U.S. POSITION IN BOSNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. POSHARD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, a couple of years ago I was asked to go to Bosnia with 14 other Members of the United States Congress here to ascertain for our colleagues here what America's position should be in that war-torn country. I was honored to go there.

The first day we flew over to Serbia and met with President Milosevic and his people, and the second day we went to Croatia and met with President Tudjman and his folks. The third day we flew into Sarajevo, and not since I had been an 18-year-old kid walking around the hills of Korea with the First Division had I witnessed such devastation in a country.

□ 1700

We landed at the airport, and guards picked us up at the edge of the airport property. They began to take us through town. People lived in burned-out buildings and shells and bunkers and basements, anywhere they could live. Eighty-six percent of the water supply was gone in the city. Very little food was getting in except through the United Nations.

But I noticed as our bus was traveling under heavy security throughout state of Sarajevo, people began running up from the bunkers and clapping, because they understood that there were 15 United States Congressmen visiting their country who were going to have something to say about their future.

We eventually prevailed upon security to let us stop in a little square where just a few months before a mortar round from the surrounding mountainside had killed 57 people. The security said, no one will come out and talk to you. They are too afraid. But by the time we got off the bus, every street filtering into that little square was filled with hundreds of people rushing to the square to surround our bus.

This one elderly gentleman, in the press of that crowd, grabbed me by the arm and said something to me that made such an indelible imprint upon

my mind I have never forgotten it to this day. He said to me, after telling me that he had lost every member of his family, his wife was gone, his brothers and sisters, his children, he was alone in the world, he said to me, with tears streaming down his eyes, Congressman, do you not understand that we only trust America? We only trust America.

In the press of the crowd, I did not think too much about his words. We got back on the bus and went to our appointed rounds, and as we were flying up to Germany to see the troops, I began to think about the words of that old man. Some things in this business you know innately in the gut.

He was not saying to me, Congressman, we only trust America's military prowess, or America's economic strength. What he was saying to me was, Congressman, we only trust the experience of America.

We live here in a multiracial, multi-ethnic, multireligious society, and because we have chosen not to tolerate each other's differences, we have killed or maimed 200,000 of our people beyond repair.

But we know America, and we know the message of America to all of the world, because you are like us. You came from every corner of the world, with different values, different cultures, different ethnicity, different religions. But for some reason or another, not perfectly so, you have made it work better than anybody else in the world, because you tolerate the differences among you. We trust you.

Two weeks to the day after I left that old man in the streets of Sarajevo, I stood before a college class of 25 21-year-old students in this country, who, one by one, rose and looked me square in the eye and said to me in no uncertain terms, Congressman, we do not trust any of you people. You are all in it for the special interests.

Mr. Speaker, to restore the trust in this country between the Representative and the represented, we must enact campaign finance reform to restore confidence from our own children and our government here.

#### TIME FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM TO BE BROUGHT TO THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. POSHARD] for an incredibly moving statement, and thank him for his support of campaign finance reform.

Mr. Speaker, people watching the House of Representatives today should be clear about what has happened here. As we speak right now, leaders of the Republican Party and members of the Republican Party are flying to New York City in private jets to attend a

fund-raising dinner. It is not even 5 o'clock, and yet we have stopped doing the legislative business for this day. The fact is that raising money is more important to the Republican Party than finishing the work that we have before us.

We are not finishing a number of important bills to make sure that government does not close at the end of this month, as we recall it closed twice in 1995 and 1996. The fact is that we have one very important piece of legislation that is not yet resolved, but which we have been repeatedly told there is just not enough time to consider. I am talking about campaign finance reform.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I have been demanding for this entire year that Speaker GINGRICH schedule time on the House floor for a measure that would reform our corrupt campaign finance laws and ban soft money. The term "soft money" refers to large contributions to political parties that are not supposed to help elect candidates, but really do.

Some soft money has some very real impact. It comes in a variety of sizes, \$25,000, \$50,000, \$250,000, and most recently even \$1 million from a single individual or organization. We want to ban soft money because we believe it has distorted our democracy. We believe that public policy has become for sale to the highest bidder, and we believe that is wrong.

But the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. NEWT GINGRICH] thinks it is more important to go to New York for a fund-raiser than to stay in Congress and work on legislation that will make our election laws more secure and protected from the influence of special interest money. Apparently there is time to go to New York to raise money for the Republican Party, but there is no time to stay here and work to perfect our democracy, and work to reduce the influence of special interest money, and ban soft money.

Mr. Speaker, I am troubled by this decision. I am deeply troubled by it, and I can imagine many Americans are troubled as well. The Speaker once said, we should clean this system up. In fact, over 2 years ago, many Members will remember, he shook hands with President Clinton in New Hampshire over a pledge to reform campaign finance laws, a pledge to the American people.

Do Members know what reforms have been implemented in that time? None. The Speaker has done nothing in 28 months to clean up our campaign finance laws, but he has continued to raise record amounts of money, and continues to believe that what American democracy needs is more money in politics, not less.

The fact is, money has simply overwhelmed our democracy. Too many decisions today in Congress are made based upon whether or not contributions were received with regard to a particular issue. It is not just whether